

signs of activity. Few of them can gain entry to Parliament, and there are comparatively few members of Parliament who share their knowledge and enthusiasm. Nor are their views satisfactorily represented in parliamentary discussions. One of the greatest evils of the party system is that it closes the lips of those who, while generally supporting the ministry in office, would like to criticize measures which have been drafted in the privacy of the Cabinet; they must vote for them in tongue-tied silence. The Press does not offer an adequate outlet for discussion, in as much as most newspapers are controlled by interests that are solidly committed to one party or the other. These enthusiasts can, then, only express themselves by the formation of "societies with active propagandas, which, if successful, may compel the attention of the Government. The many-sidedness and activity of these private reformers may be inferred from the astonishingly large number of societies that are on foot, with optimistic programmes of the utmost diversity— from the feeding of school children to the preservation of open spaces, from the closing down of the liquor trade to the stopping of vaccination. Their aims are sometimes admirable, sometimes absurd, but their upspringing is a genuine sign of democratic vitality : they are unknown in countries where the government is democratic only in name. There is no place for

them in the party system. By vigorous canvassing they may induce a Cabinet to adopt an idea. But their influence is from outside : it is rather that of an advocate than an adviser.

We may, however, assume with some reason that they may gain a more direct influence in political councils. If, as appears probable, we may read our own future in the political conditions at which the United States, untrammelled by precedent, have